



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

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Police Officer for the Department of Defense Pleads Guilty to Traveling Into the District of Columbia To Engage in Illicit Sexual Conduct and Enticing a Minor Child

WASHINGTON – Matthew McMullen, a 27-year-old police officer, working for the Department of the Defense, pled guilty today to traveling interstate to engage in illicit sexual conduct and enticing a minor, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

McMullen, of California, Md., entered the guilty plea in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The Honorable Gladys Kessler is to sentence him July 12, 2011. McMullen faces a maximum sentence of 30 years of imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. Under federal sentencing guidelines, he faces a likely sentencing range of 46 to 57 months in prison.

According to the government's evidence, on February 4, 2011, an undercover officer with the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force entered a social network site. The defendant contacted the undercover officer and they subsequently began communicating that day by e-mail. During their conversation, McMullen expressed interest in having sexual contact with an under-aged child. The defendant traveled from Maryland to a pre-arranged meeting place in Washington, D.C. When he arrived at the meeting place, he was arrested.

This case was brought as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood initiative and investigated by the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, which includes members of the FBI's Washington Field Office and MPD. In February 2006, the Attorney General created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorney's Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director McJunkin and Chief Lanier praised the MPD Detectives and Special Agents of the FBI Child Exploitation Task Force. They also commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Julieanne Himmelstein, who is prosecuting the case.

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